Chambers, Ernest J (Chief Press Censor, Ottawa) Feb.-Mar. 1918

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CANADA.

EJC/C

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

In your reply refer to O.P.O. 326-1

CONFIDENTIAL:

OFFICE OF CHIEF PRESS CENSOR.

Ottawa, Ont., February 19,1918.

Dear Sir Robert Falconer,-

I do not know whether you will consider yourself justified in taking any action in a case to which I am about to draw your attention, but knowing your desire to assist the Empire and the cause for which we are at the present time fighting, in every way, I thought I would take the liberty of submitting the matter to you.

This is the story:

An eminent literary gentleman occupying a very high and responsible position in connection with press censorship work at Washington, concluded a recent letter to me by drawing my attention to alleged statements made by Dr.Cullis, a lady who at the time the alleged statements were made was going to the University of Toronto for four months, to teach Physiology .

According to two different informants of my correspondent, Dr.Cullis told very weird and undesirable tales about food scarcity in England, and had antagonized Americans whom she had met in New York and elsewhere by her outspoken and apparently uncalled for criticism of the United States government and people. One particular interview was cited where Dr.Cullis had worked her hearers in New York up to a state of rage by her denunciations of Americans who, she declared, had gone into the war solely for the sake of the money to be made out of it.

The censorship authorities in the United States are making efforts to suppress ungenerous and unfriendly criticism of Great Britain, and the officials engaged in this work naturally feel that we should do our part by trying as far as possible to put a stop to unjust criticism of the United States and its people. As you know the circulating of statements calculated to cause trouble with an allied or neutral state is described as "objectionable" in the Consolidated Orders Respecting Censorship.

I do not know whether you will feel disposed to suggest to Dr.Cullis the advisability of refraining from circulating statements calculated to give offense to our good friends and allies across the lines, but if an opportunity should present itself and you felt disposed to take advantage of it, I would not be surprised if the result would be useful. You will be the best judge of this, however, and you will quite understand, I am sure, the motive

which inspired

Sir Robert Falconer, Ll.D., etc.,

President, Toronto University,

Toronto, Ont.

Chambers, Ernest J

Chief Press Censor, Ottawa

Feb-Mar 1918

which inspired me to address you upon this somewhat delicate subject.

With respectful regards,

Your obedient servant,

Ernest J. Chambers

Colonel,
Chief Press Censor for Canada.

February 20th, 1918

Colonel E. J. Chambers,
Chief Censor, Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Colonel Chambers;

I am very much astonished to find from your letter that Miss Cullis said anything in New York which would have antagonised Americans by her criticism of the United States Government and its people. Miss Cullis is a lady of high distinction, in fact one of the best known women speakers in England. She is head of the Department of Physiology in the Medical College for Women in London, and was loaned to us as a great favour for four months to help us out. She has done a good deal of speaking since coming to Toronto, mainly I believe in the way of stimulating our people to economy in every direction. I should judge that she is a tactful lady, and I have never heard her say a word in criticism of the United States. I will, however, take an opportunity in the most discreet way I can to see what there is in this report.

This afternoon I am leaving for Philadelphia and I do not expect to be back until the beginning of next week.

Miss Cullis has no intention of going to the United States as far as I am aware, and certainly I am surprised that anything of the kind should have occurred.

I will, however, let you know if I find anything further about the matter.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

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EJC/JO

CONFIDENTIAL:

CANADA.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

OFFICE OF CHIEF PRESS CENSOR.

IN YOUR REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO C. P. C.

326-1

Ottawa, Ont., February 21, 1918.

Dear Sir Robert Falconer,-

I wish to thank you for your letter of February the 20th, this moment to hand, and to assure you that I knew it was but necessary to refer the case of Miss Cullis to you, to interest you in the matter.

I wish to assure you that I have no desire to suggest any line of action, having no views on the subject and knowing that the question is [redacted] safe left entirely in your capable hands.

Yours respectfully,

Ernest J. Chambers

Chief Press Censor for Canada.

Sir Robert Falconer, LL.D., &c.,
President Toronto University,
Toronto, Ont.

Confidential. February 28th, 1918

Colonel E. J. Chambers,

Chief Censor, Ottawa, Ont.

Dear Colonel Chambers:

Since returning from the United States I have had a long conversation with Miss Cullis about the story which you sent me regarding her criticism of the Americans. I have given her the details of the story and she assures me that she cannot understand how it originated.

On the way across she associated on the "Olympic" with a very small group of American friends and Sir Charles Gordon as well as an English Colonel, and these Americans showed her every attention, and with them she formed quite close friendships. They put her up at the Colony Club in New York where she saw nobody. She had lunch with Dr. Graham Lusk and his wife and one other stranger, and talked quite intimately with them, but not in such a way as to utter anything that would prejudice their kind hospitality to her, and now the story originated is to her inexplicable.

I am of opinion that she is right when she asks that the American authorities should trace the origin of this story, and that she should have some definite statement as to the persons who made these charges.

I lay this matter before you in this way for two reasons; in the first place Miss Cullis tells me that she was approached in England

with a view to the possibility of her coming to the United States to give a series of addresses with regard to women's work in England during the war. She has been so effective during the short time that she has been in Canada that I believe she could render excellent service of this character in the United States, and if so, nothing of this kind should be allowed to interfere with such a mission, if it should be decided upon. I understand that a number of prominent people are being brought across to the United States to lay the position of England before the country, and I can well believe that there would be few, if any, better qualified than Miss Cullis to speak on women's work. The second reason why I believe the matter should be traced to its source is due to information that was given me last week in Philadelphia by a member of the British Mission, a gentleman from Cambridge, who told me that German propaganda is at work to stir up ill feeling between Great Britain and the United States and that part of their effort is to prejudice speakers who are coming by spreading reports as to their anti-American bias. Whenever this gentleman spoke to me about it, it at once occurred to me that in this attack upon Miss Cullis there may be the evidence of some pro-German propaganda, which is serious enough to be traced to its source.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

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EJC/JO

CANADA.

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

OFFICE OF CHIEF PRESS CENSOR.

In your reply refer to O.P.C.

CONFIDENTIAL:

Ottawa, Ont., March 1, 1918.

Dear Sir Robert Falconer,-

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of February the 28th, and note with much interest your remarks regarding the case of Miss Cullis. I think it extremely likely that the statements regarding this lady may have emanated from enemy sources for the work I am doing here has given me ample opportunity to realize something of the devious methods of the enemy propagandists in the United States.

I am taking the liberty of forwarding a copy of your communication to the gentleman through whom I originally obtained information that such statements regarding Miss Cullis were afloat. For your own information I think I should state that My correspondent was Mr. William Churchill, Director of the Division of Foreign-Language Publications of the Committee on Public Information, Washington, D.C. Mr. Churchill is a very well known literary man, as you perhaps know. I am suggesting to him that this particular case should be investigated and also that the whole question of the supposed propaganda to drive the wedge between Great Britain and the United States might well bear looking into by the United States Secret Service people.

Perhaps I might add that this very matter has been the subject of considerable correspondence and effort. This service has done everything possible to attempt to locate people interesting themselves in spreading unfriendly stories regarding the United States and many such have been brought sharply to account. In the United States the Committee on Public Information, which is in very close touch indeed with this service, is co-operating along the same lines and as a means of counter-propaganda, Mr. Creel, Chairman of the Committee on Public Information, has had brought out a very large edition of an Anthology of Verse designed to present Great Britain and the other Allies, but more particularly Great Britain, in the most favourable light possible to the bulk of the American people. This volume which contains a wonderfully well chosen selection of British patriotic verse and verses by non-British writers paying tribute to Great Britain's greatness and glories, has been distributed broadcast throughout the United States, several editions aggregating five hundred or six hundred thousand copies having been issued.

When I hear from Mr. Churchill, I will communicate with you further on the subject.

With respectful regards,

Yours faithfully,

Ernest J. Chambers

Chief Press Censor for Canada.

Sir Robert Falconer,
President University of Toronto,
Toronto, Ont.

March 2nd, 1918

Colonel F. J. Chasters,

Chief Press Censor,

Ottawa.

Dear Colonel Chasters,

Many thanks for your letter. I am glad that you are taking up the matter with the Washington authorities because I believe it needs investigation.

With kind regards, I am,

Yours sincerely,

President.

March 25th, 1918

Colonel Chambers,

Chief Press Censor,

Ottawa, Ont.

My dear Colonel Chambers:

I have not yet had any word through you from the authorities at Washington as to the grounds on which the report arose concerning Miss Cullis. Would you kindly jog their memory with regard to it so that we may know just where we are in the matter ?

Yours sincerely,

President.

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EJC/JO

CANADA.
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.
OFFICE OF CHIEF PRESS CENSOR.

IN YOUR REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO C. P. C.
326-1

Ottawa, Ont., March 27, 1918.

Dear Sir Robert Falconer,-

I have not yet had any word myself from the Authorities at Washington, as to the grounds on which the report arose concerning Miss Cullis. This has probably been due to the fact that Mr. Churchill and the whole of the Censorship Staff at Washington have been moving about a great deal lately; as a matter of fact, several of the members of the staff being despatched to Russia and the service generally demoralized as a result.

It is probable also that there has been delay on account of the Washington people expecting me to go down there for a conference. I had intended to go a week or more ago, but the present offensive at the front necessitates my remaining here. I will endeavour to procure some information, however, and will let you know.

Yours faithfully,
Ernest J. Chambers
Chief Press Censor for Canada.

Sir Robert Falconer,
President University of Toronto,
Toronto, Ont.